Use of Memes and Their Impact on Society: Comparison Between Japan and America

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Significance of the Study

Quenten
- Different types of social media & user generated content in Japan
- Cultural associations & sense of comedy
- Why things become popular in social media

Heather
- Development of memes
- Interest in design differences between Japan & America
- How interesting designs in Japan translate into meme culture
Research Questions

1. What cultural differences influence the creation and circulation of memes in Japan and America?

2. What is the impact of memes on society in Japan versus America?
Research Background

1. Definition of a Meme
2. History of Memes in Japan and America
3. Memes & Social Media
4. Discourse Analysis
Literature Review: Definition of a Meme

**Mimema** = Ancient Greek, “something imitated” (Börzsei, 2013)

**Internet Meme** = the posting, sharing, and remixing digital content to communicate jokes, emotions, & opinions (Rosa-Carrillo, 2015)

1. **High fidelity static memes** = replicated with very little variation
2. **Remixed memes** = replicated via evolution, adaptation, transformation of original (Knobel, 2005)

**Image macro** = most widely used meme (Börzsei, 2013)
## Literature Review: History of Memes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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| 1980s | First meme = emoticon (Börzsei, 2013)  
Use of word “meme” to describe units of cultural evolution (Dawkins, 1989) |
| 1990s | Photoshop makes creation of memes easier (West) |
| 2000s | Increased use of Internet = increased number of memes (Börzsei, 2013) |
| 2006 | Emergence of LOLCats & Advice Animal memes (Börzsei, 2013) |
| 2009 | “Meme” emerges in mainstream (Rosa-Carrillo, 2015) |
| 2012 | Websites dedicated to cataloging Memes arise (Börzsei, 2013) |
Literature Review: Memes & Social Media

**Japan** (Apex, 2015)

1. LINE = 40%
2. Twitter = 20%
3. Facebook = 17%

**America** (Statista, 2016)

1. Facebook 42.4%
2. Youtube 24.3%
3. Reddit 5.4%

“Japan” Memes = 627

“America” Memes = 472

Total Memes = 14,678

(Know Your Meme, 2016)
Dawkins, R. (1989) *The Selfish gene*. The first documented use of the word “Meme” and explanation of its use and how it relates to the evolution of Humans.

Blackmore, S.J. (1999). *The meme machine*. Discusses memes as an idea, behavior or skill that can be transferred from one person to another.

Research Method

Survey
- Google Forms survey
  - Easy to distribute on web
  - Easy to create graphs
- Administered in both English & Japanese
- Maximum 20 questions

Respondents
- Total: 60 University Students (ages 19-24)
  - 30 Japanese
    - 15 Male
    - 15 Female
  - 30 American
    - 15 Male
    - 15 Female
Bibliography


To Be Continued...


Questions?